

Weekly Study Guide

The week of March 15, 2015

Daily Readings

Monday	Colossians 3:12-4:1	Tuesday	Colossians 4:2-18	Wednesday	Colossians 1
Thursday	Colossians 2	Friday	Colossians 3	Saturday	Colossians 4

My notes on this week's readings...

Next Week in Worship

Next week's message: Mission of Hope

Next week's readings: Matthew 6:25-34

Join us next week to hear an encouraging message from Brad Johnson, president of Mission of Hope: Haiti. First Lutheran partners with Mission of Hope to bring the hope of Christ to every man, woman, and child in Haiti. For the last five years, we've been sending teams to Haiti, supporting community development, sharing the love of Jesus, and supporting children and orphans with prayer and resources. Don't miss a great week next week.

first lutheran church

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Group Discussion

Connect	<p>Have you ever had a job or done something that required you to wear a uniform or a particular set of clothes? Why was that needed?</p>
Learn	<p>Read Colossians 3:12-4:18 out loud. Start by noting your first impressions and questions. What stands out to you about this passage? What questions do you have?</p> <p>Colossians 3:12 is a theme verse for all that follows. Read this verse again out loud and discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We are “God’s chosen people.” What does it mean to you to be “chosen”? ... by God?• As God’s chosen people, you are “holy and beloved.” How conscious are you of this identity? What difference would it make if this were to really sink into your mind and heart?• Read the list of virtues that we are to “clothe ourselves” with: compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. How do you understand these words? What would an example be?• Read Colossians 3:14. The virtues from 3:12 could be seen as five completely separate things, but this verse says that love holds them all together. What do you think that means? <p>Colossians 3:18-4:1 is a controversial passage. It can sound sexist or as if it promotes slavery. It’s important to read this passage in the context of the first century Roman world, and also in the context of Paul’s other letters and examples. We will read this passage best if we think of it as very practical instruction for putting Colossians 3:12 (or 12-17) into practice in the daily relationships of a first century Colossian household.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Verse 18 is especially controversial, but it helps to know that a wife’s submission was the absolute norm in the first century. Paul radically “Christianized” their vision of marriage by teaching mutual submission (Ephesians 5:21, parallel to this passage), explaining that a wife’s submission should be the kind that is fitting “in the Lord” (not in their patriarchal culture), and telling husbands to love and care for their wives. Re-read Colossians 3:12-14 and ask: What cultural expectations of marriage in our world need to be converted to Christ?• Read also 3:20-21. Use your imagination. How might parents today cause their children to lose heart or become discouraged?• Finally, read 3:22-4:1. Paul redefines economic relationships as he previously redefined family relationships. Slaves are actually serving the Lord (not their earthly lord); they will receive an inheritance; and there is no partiality or favoritism. Masters, too, need to remember they have a master in heaven. Use your imagination again. What relationships might need to be similarly re-visioned around the Gospel of Jesus in our world? Employee relationships? Global manufacturing? Class, power, or status differences in our own culture?
Apply	<p>This passage is rich enough to say many things to many people. What might God be using this passage to say to your heart? How will you respond to that?</p>
Pray	<p>In Colossians 1:3-14, Paul began with prayer for the Colossians. In Colossians 4:2-4, Paul ends by asking them to pray for him. Pray today for one another and for other Christian churches and leaders. Pray for “open doors” to “declare the mystery of Christ.”</p>